



Division of Public Health Services

*Office of the Assistant Director
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JANET NAPOLITANO, GOVERNOR
CATHERINE R. EDEN, DIRECTOR

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Dear Pediatric Health Care Provider,

Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) still has approximately 29,000 doses of preservative-free influenza vaccine available to order for use in children ages 6 months through 35 months of age. This preservative-free vaccine is not part of the Vaccine for Children Program, and can be used for all high risk pediatric patients, age 6 - 35 months. The Arizona Department of Health Services is strongly recommending that all health care providers who serve pediatric patients review their patient charts to determine if they need to order more vaccine this year.

This group includes all children age 6-23 months and children age 24-35 months with chronic medical conditions. Also children who have never previously received an influenza vaccine will need two doses of vaccine this season. Therefore, pediatric patients who have received a dose already this year should go ahead and get their second dose.

Additionally, many children who were too young to receive vaccine in October are now over 6 months old, or will be in the coming months. Remember that these young infants need to receive their influenza vaccinations.

Preservative-free influenza vaccine comes in pre-filled syringes as a dose of 0.25 ml; this is the proper dose for children from 6 months through 35 months of age. This vaccine is currently available because preservative-containing vaccine arrived earlier than pre-filled syringes. Many families had their young children vaccinated with preservative containing vaccine, rather than waiting for the pre-filled syringes.

It is of utmost importance that we ensure that our state's vulnerable pediatric populations are provided the protection they need from influenza. By re-assessing your patients' needs this influenza season you will go a long way towards ensuring this protection.

To order preservative-free influenza vaccine, go to the ADHS web site at <http://www.azdhs.gov/flu>. The influenza vaccine ordering process will be explained under "Vaccine Request Information for Health Providers."

Sincerely,

David M. Engelthaler, M.S.
State Epidemiologist (Acting)

Karen Lewis, M.D.
Medical Director
Bureau of Epidemiology and Disease Control